



## Maintaining a CERT Program

### Step 3: Planning, Continuing, and Training

Continuing training, exercises, and projects will be important for several reasons. It will help CERTs to maintain and improve their skills, it will keep volunteer involvement and interest high, and it will benefit the entire program and community. This step provides some possible topics and approaches to providing continuing training to CERT volunteers.

### Planning and Conducting Refresher Training

Unless your CERTs exercise or are activated regularly, refresher training will be a necessity to keep skills sharp and interest high—it is the "use it or lose it" principle. If your community has experienced a major emergency or disaster recently, you may want to review your needs assessment and look for gaps in services.

### Benefits of Continued Training

Be creative about training opportunities for CERT members. Training provides, not only skill improvement and maintenance, it provides an opportunity for you to interact more directly with the volunteers and it helps to maintain volunteer interest and involvement. Remember, you are building a local resource to help you and others.

### Offering Advanced Training

You may also wish to present training to enhance CERT members' skills beyond the basic level. For example, some CERT program coordinators have offered training in:

- The Incident Command System (ICS)
- Donations management

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Automatic external defibrillator (AED)
- Advanced first-aid techniques
- Community relations
- Damage assessment
- Traffic control
- Animal control

### Soliciting Suggestions

Your CERT volunteers may have suggestions for refresher or skill-enhancement training so be sure to invite their input. A good way to gain volunteer input is through interest surveys or focus groups, which can be combined with a periodic program evaluation.

### Tapping External Resources

Some skill-enhancement training is available through outside organizations. Some sources that you can check for refresher or skill-enhancement training are listed below.

- The American Red Cross offers training in first aid, CPR, and AED. The Red Cross also has a variety of materials that may be of interest to CERT members.
- State emergency management agencies offer a variety of training programs and may be able to provide exercise design assistance.
- Local public and private agencies may have training that, if modified, would be useful for CERT volunteers (utility companies, Humane Society,

ARES/RACES, police departments, National Weather Service, mental health departments, and more).

FEMA will help by placing CERT self-study materials and refresher quizzes on its website. Be sure to check the CERT site often for updated materials.

**For additional information on Michigan Citizen Corps and the CERT program contact Michigan Citizen Corps Program Director Gary Zulinski at (517) 241-3867 or [zulinskig@michigan.gov](mailto:zulinskig@michigan.gov)**